

Lionfish: From Sea to Table



Capturing

Lionfish have venomous spines along the top and undersides of the body (see diagram). Take precautions and use proper equipment when attempting to capture or handle these fish. Clear vinyl collecting nets with mesh bottoms or fish spears with paralyzer tips are ideal for capturing the fish. To collect a lionfish with a net, position one vinyl net behind the fish while using a second net to maneuver the fish into the first. Lionfish can also be caught occasionally by hook and line and sometimes in fish traps.

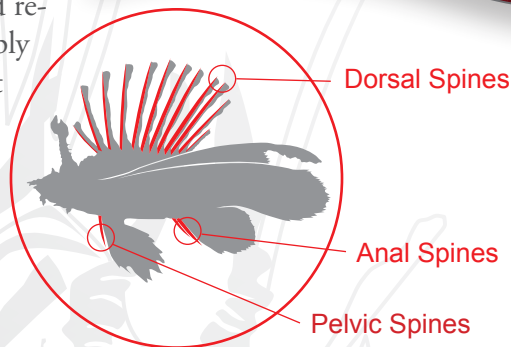
Handling

Minimize the risk of stings by using puncture-proof gloves. Firmly grasp the dead lionfish by its head to avoid the venomous spines. Gloves will also protect your hands from irritation by non-venomous bones on the head.



First Aid

If stung, seek medical attention promptly. Check for and remove any obvious pieces of spine left in the wound. Apply hot water to the wound (as hot as one can stand without scalding) until the pain subsides. Common symptoms of most stings include pain and swelling. In extreme cases, skin necrosis and paralysis can occur.



Cleaning

The dorsal, anal, and pelvic spines are venomous. These spines can be removed with kitchen shears or clippers. Once the spines are removed the lionfish can be cleaned like any other fish.

Preparation

Lionfish is a delicious, delicately flavored fish, which can be prepared many different ways. The taste and texture has been compared to highly regarded grouper, snapper or hogfish. Caution should be used when consuming lionfish from locations known to have ciguatera.

